

Form S-4: Sage-Grouse Site-Scale Habitat Suitability Worksheet – Upland Summer/Late Brood-Rearing Habitat Directions

1. Use this worksheet to interpret field data summarized on the “Sage-Grouse Site-Scale Seasonal Habitat Data Summary” (form S-1).
2. Complete all location information at the top of the form. Be sure to list all UTM coordinates or other identifying feature of all sites being summarized. Most of the information should be self-explanatory except the following:

Population: Identify the population with which the habitat is associated. This definition also includes small populations. Population names are found in figure 3.

Home Range Name: Identify the home range area using a major drainage area or other distinguishing land feature (e.g., Little Lost River home range).

Land Cover Type: Identify the cover type of the data collected. Use plant alliances or associations (Reid et al. 2002) for sagebrush or grassland communities; use www.natureserve.org/explorer (International Classification of Ecological Communities) or other sampling strata to describe the habitat (e.g., percent sagebrush categories). Use the species symbol for dominant species in the overstory and understory (table B-1), for example ARTRW8 (alliance level – Wyoming big sagebrush) or ARTRW8/FEID (association level – Wyoming big sagebrush/Idaho fescue).

Ecological Site: Refer to soil maps, range site guides, and ecological site descriptions where available and record the appropriate ecological site. Use the species symbol for dominant species in the overstory and understory.

Number of Transects: Record the number of 50-m transects completed within the land cover type.

Area Sampled: Record the total area (indicating ha/ac) of the land cover type sampled.

3. Transfer data from the “Sage-Grouse Site-Scale Seasonal Habitat Data Summary” (form S-1) to this form. Enter the appropriate mean (\bar{x}) and number (n) values where appropriate for the indicators in the column under \bar{x} .

Preferred Forb Availability: Check the appropriate suitability category based on data derived using the “Sage-Grouse Preferred Forb Diversity Form.” The suitability evaluation must be relative to abundance, diversity, and availability relative to ecological site potential. Write a short narrative in the notes section, based on the species observed and available site information.

4. Determine the appropriate suitability category and mark (✓) each indicator as suitable, marginal, or unsuitable.
5. Determine **site-scale suitability**. Overall suitability takes into consideration the relationship between the indicators and their relative importance. This evaluation is based on professional judgment using the indicators for guidance. Explain overall site suitability in the rationale section.
6. Indicate if **site potential** is a factor for a suitability description of marginal or unsuitable. Explain further in the rationale section.
7. Indicate **drought condition** using local weather station data or as reported for the region of concern on the National Weather Service website: www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/research/us-drought-monthly.html.
8. Attach field data sheet(s) and photographs used for this site-scale description.
9. Provide a copy of this form to the state wildlife agency’s sage-grouse coordinator.